

Jenison Historical Association

JENISON HISTORY

April 2012

Issue No.: 2012-3

www.jenisonhistory.org

JENISON HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION
PO Box 664
Jenison, Michigan 49429
TELEPHONE
(616) 457-4398

Our mission is to learn about Jenison history, obtain artifacts relating to its history, and maintain the Jenison Historical Museum as a place to share and display our heritage.

The Grand River Series

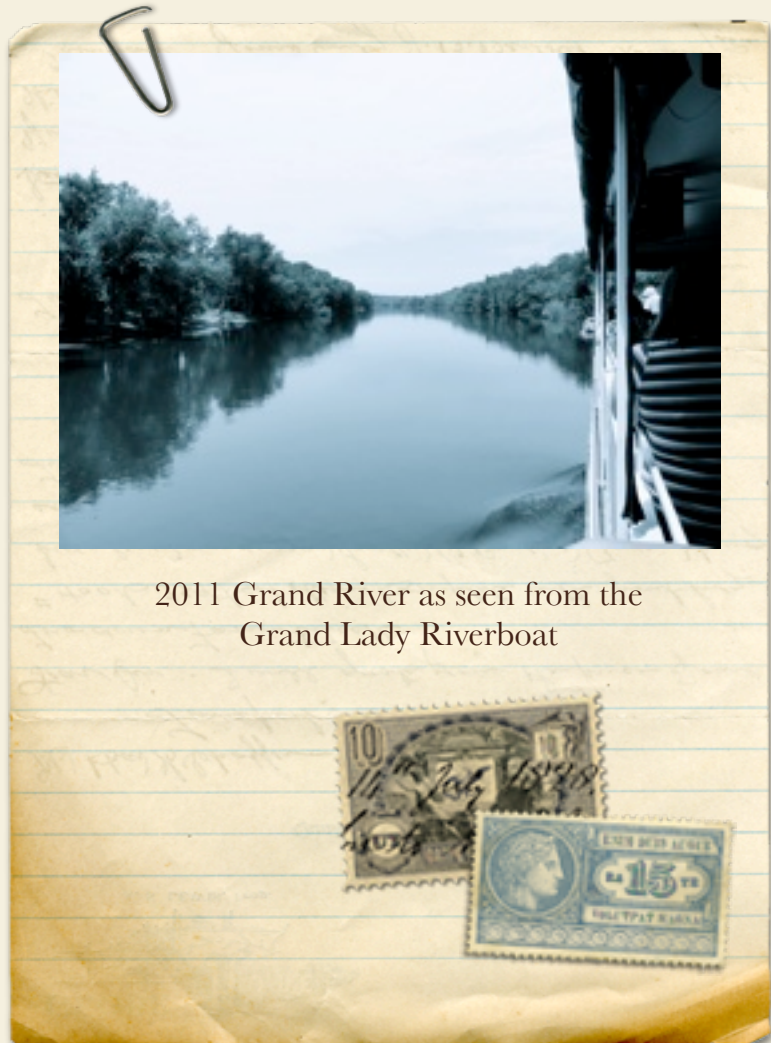
Our second in the three part series on the Grand River will explore the Crossings, that allowed us to meet our neighbors.

Don't worry if you missed the 1st in the series, come and pick up on part 2 much of the part 1 information is still on display.

Crossing the Grand, April 14, 2012
Riverboats of the Grand, May 12, 2012
2-4 PM

We will culminate the series with our 3rd Annual Riverboat tour on the Grand Lady.
Tickets are \$10 and are available now.

Donations are appreciated to help maintain the Tiffany House Museum, Jenison



From the Archives

If you have a topic you would like to contribute (your family stories, etc.) please contact the editor, we would love to include your story.

ORAL HISTORY WITH BOB ANDRE

written by Virginia Timmer

[This conversation was between Virginia Timmer and Bob Andre, and was held on January 26, 1999.]

Bob, who formerly had a State Farm Insurance business and built the State Farm building across, and east of, what was the L & L Jenison Mill.

We talked about Ben Hanchett. I said my dad started working for the Hanchetts in 1928--several years before the Great Depression and Ben Hanchett's death (1933) which must have made my dad very busy at the L & L Jenison Co.

We talked about Bessie Hanchett, Ben's wife, formerly Bessie Husband, and what a nice lady she was and Bob said, "They had class." "They" meaning Bessie and her mother Margaret Husband. I agreed wholeheartedly with what he said.

We agreed that the two children of Ben and Bessie (Gerald Jenison and Elizabeth Jeanette "Brownie" Hanchett) had an easy life. Bob said he was their insurance agent and got to their 125 College Ave.

home several times. I told Bob the story my dad told, that Bessie and Ben always wanted the kids to look nice--maybe to put them on show--and they were kind of sickly. A doctor told Ben and Bessie to let the kids play and get dirty. Bob said that sounded like something old Dr. Wedgwood would have said; also, Dr. Hager who Bob said was kind of blunt.

I said Gerald or Brownie really never held a job. Gerald was in the theater all the time and Brownie did write books and had a place in New York where writers could come.

I remember Mrs. Tiffany telling me that when the Hanchetts rented out the place in New York, they left their jewelry and everything there. Mrs. Tiffany told me if she had known that, she would have taken the jewelry and we'd have it now for the museum. I told Bob when Tiffany's bought what is now the museum, they bought it with everything in it--furniture, attic full of Civic Theater costumes in trunks, historical things, etc. I told Bob, I used to help them. I'd fix Mrs. Tiffany's hair and even after she moved to Grand Rapids, I'd go and fix her hair and that's when she began giving me things that were Jenison history and now

these things are at the museum. Mrs. Tiffany had given some historical items to the Union Bank which they had framed and hung in the upstairs rooms. She told me if she had known that we were going to save her house for a museum, she would have given those things to us. We agreed that Mrs. Tiffany would be very happy that these items were given to us when the Union Bank went out of business; the museum also received the L & L Mill replica made by Ysbrandt Groendyke.

I told Bob I get calls regularly from people who have artifacts and I mentioned the L & L Jenison calendar plate and the old calendar from

Jenison Hardware (formerly we called it "Johnny's Store" when it sold groceries and was on the site of the former Ohler Brothers Store across the original Main Street from the L & L Jenison Store). Bob mentioned the 1913 calendar we have at the museum as that was the year he was born.

Bob told me the story of the Edison Phonograph--the one with the morning glory horn. Bob's aunt used to live in the house next door to the museum (the house

ORAL HISTORY WITH BOB ANDRE (CONT)

that was moved(?) The house we (Virginia Timmer) lived in was built in 1915 at 22 Port Sheldon, next to what is now the Jenison Museum. Bob didn't know there had been another house there. His aunt and uncle were Dick and Bertha Rosema. He mentioned the Balkema family who I think lived at 12 Port Sheldon where I grew up. Bob said Bessie Balkema stepped out of an upstairs window in the 1904 flood into a boat to go somewhere.

Dick Rosema, later, was herdsman at the Kelsey farm, formerly the Roberts farm (Bob called him "Dr. Roberts."), on Port Sheldon near 18th. The old house is still standing. I remember the old barn burned down years ago and another barn built. Across Port Sheldon was another old barn that had a cupola on top. That was torn down a few years ago. There are condos in that area now.

His Aunt Bertha and Uncle Dick Rosema had the urge to homestead out west so they moved to Wyoming. Bertha was Bob's mother's sister. While the Rosemas lived in Jenison, Bertha's sister, Bob's Aunt Millie--the oldest of the three sisters, wanted a phonograph. It

was on sale in Grand Rapids. Her dad agreed to pay \$50 if she paid the rest, so she took the interurban from Jenison to Grand Rapids and brought it home--morning glory horn and all--on the interurban. She had her first concert at her sister, Bertha Rosema, next door to the museum where the Edison talking machine is now.

Bob didn't know the machine wasn't working. I told him Mr. LaForest Galer had fixed it at one time and what a big help Betty Galer was to us at the museum as she knew antiques and how to arrange the furniture. Bob said they visit the Galers frequently at Freedom Village. Galers celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary on Dec. 31, 1998.

(Typed up by Virginia Piers Timmer --Mrs. Burton D.)

Bob Andre: passed away October 21, 2000 at age 86.

He was a member of:

- Grandville Jenison Congregational Church
- Grandville Rotary
- Bursley School Board

A Pioneer family that came to Jenison in the 1840'S

41 years with State Farm Insurance, built the Andre Building in 1955, once site of the Jenison Post Office after L & L Jenison store was sold. Bob's father, Hiram, operated the Andre Farm while Bob's Grandfather was Sheriff of Ottawa County and later was with State Farm.

Bob's Father was a l s o instrumental in establishing the Michigan Farm Bureau throughout the State in the Early 1920's

Museum Happenings

April

Continues the series on The Grand River.

Tickets available for the Riverboat ride in July. Come to the Board Meeting, Open House, or call Liz Timmer (457-3708) to reserve your tickets. Tickets are \$10.

Watch the calendar on the web for other upcoming events.

We look forward to seeing you, and if you would like to volunteer to help at any of these events, please contact the museum at 457-4398 or email us at info@jenisonhistory.org.

Thank You:

Also, JHA would like to extend a big thank you to the Four Seasons Garden Club for the beautiful gardens at the Museum in 2011. We look forward to another beautiful year of flowers.

The garden club meets the 3rd Thursday of each month, except January at the Grandville Senior Center at 7 PM.

Are you a member??

If you are not a dues paying member, please consider joining to help support the Association. Dues are a bargain at only \$10 per year. Contact the JHA at info@jenisonhistory.org or

calling the museum

616-457-4398

JHA Board Opportunities:

There are current openings on the JHA Board. Would you consider volunteering a few hours a month to maintenance of the museum and learning about and preserving our Jenison heritage? Please contact a board member or send an email to info@jenisonhistory.org.



Volunteer Opportunities!!

Museum Cleaning: This is a big job, as you can well imagine, that needs constant attention in order to have the museum look it's best during the open houses. Contact any board member if you can lend a few hours.

Tour Guides: The school tours are a great way of teaching the children about our history and is such a rewarding experience. You won't regret being a part of this experience for our local children. Joyce

Klawiter would love to hear from you.

Community Displays: An initiative is to get some displays out into the community, possible to local banks, schools and businesses. What better way to get awareness out into the community than to bring the museum to them. Grayce Lancaster is heading up this project. She would welcome any help you might be able to offer from finding the locations to

picking display material and setting up the displays.

And the list goes on... Monthly Open Houses, Theme's for Open Houses, Inventory, Museum Maintenance, board trustee.

You can come to a monthly meeting or reach out to any board member if you would like to volunteer in any particular area.

Restorations Needed

The picture shown is but one of the pictures that JHA is looking to restore. This picture is of President Garfield and his family. He



came to our area to visit his brother, Thomas, who lived in Jamestown, one account says his last visit was 3 years before he was assassination in 1881. This picture of Garfield and his family, is showing signs of deterioration which can still be stopped, but the price is

upwards of \$600 for just this one picture.

JHA is starting a drive to build a restoration fund with the donations earmarked for just such projects. Would you be willing to donate to help restore this picture and others in need of repair?

Come to the next open house to learn more, or you can send your donation to PO Box 664, Jenison MI 49429 and mark it for the Restoration Fund.

For Sale at the Museum

Jenison Museum Note Pads	\$ 1.50
Stationary with Envelopes	\$ 2.00
Book: Bend in the River	\$10.00
Book: At the Bend	\$ 3.00
Mill Print (unframed)	\$10.00
Jenison at the Bend CD	\$10.00
Historical Prints:	
Large	\$10.00
Small	\$ 7.50

Available during any open house, or call the Museum at 457-4398

JHA TRUSTEE'S

Chair

Liz Timmer (13)

Vice Chair/Curator

Ken Williams (14)

Treasurer/Editor

Ruth Lowing (14)

Social Secretary

Nellie DeLaat (13)

Recording Secretary

Bev Potter (13)

Tours/Co-Archivist

Joyce Klawiter (12)

Co-Archivist

Barb Semeyn (14)

Maintenance/Historian

Mike Timmer (13)

Trustee

Yvonne Williams (14)

Township Rep

Del South

(##) = year of re-election to the board

Contact Information: To reach any board member, leave a message at 457-4398 or info@jenisonhistory.org

Historical Association of Michigan

Find us on the registry of the Historical Society of Michigan
www.hsmichigan.org

We are now on Facebook, find us at Jenison History Association and become a friend.



Jenison Historical Association
PO Box 664
Jenison, MI 49429

2012 Meeting Schedule

Thursday, April 19 - Georgetown Library
Thursday, May 17 - Rosewood Ref. Church
Thursday, June 21 - Georgetown Library
Thursday, July 19 - Georgetown Library
Thursday, August 16 - Rosewood Ref. Church
Thursday, September 20 - Rosewood Ref. Church
Thursday, October 18 - Georgetown Library
Thursday, November 15 - Georgetown Library

No Meeting in December, 2011

All meetings begin at 6:45 PM unless noted

2012 Museum Open House Schedule

April 14	2-4 PM	Crossing the Grand
May 12	2-4 PM	History of the Riverboat
June 16	2-4 PM	
July 14	2-4 PM	Riverboat Ride (Tentative)
September 8	2-4 PM	Jenison Public Schools memorabilia/yearbook party
October 13	2-4 PM	
December 8	1-4 PM	Holiday Open House
January 12 2013	2-4 PM	2nd Holiday Open House
1st Tuesday of the month	April thru November	10 AM - Noon

Call to volunteer your time at the open houses